Twentieth-Century American Art

Twentieth-Century American Art celebrates the opening of the north gallery of the Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center. The Museum and its programs are supported by The Equitable.

This exhibition has been selected from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art by Patterson Sims, Associate Curator, Permanent Collection. The installation will remain on view for approximately a year and will be replaced by subsequent long-term installations of other works from the Permanent Collection. The south gallery of the Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center is devoted to five changing exhibitions each year.

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Back cover: Franz Kline, *Dahlia,* 1959

Foreword

Since 1973 the branch museums of the Whitney Museum of American Art have enabled the Museum to extend its programs and activities to a vastly larger and more diverse audience. This joint endeavor with American business has been extraordinarily successful in its pioneering effort to familiarize the public with the best accomplishments of American artists.

The Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center, the fourth branch museum, is special among our branches because it has two exhibition galleries, one devoted to the Permanent Collection and one to temporary exhibitions. The Permanent Collection installation at Equitable Center offers visitors an overview of important developments in twentieth-century American art and provides a context for examining issues raised by the changing exhibitions. Through a dynamic program of exhibitions, publications, educational activities, and performances, it is anticipated that the Whitney Museum at Equitable Center will become a major cultural resource for the neighborhood.

John Carter, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Equitable, has supported this endeavor with notable enthusiasm since its inception. Benjamin D. Holloway, Chairman, Equitable Real Estate Group Inc., has guided this project, always perceiving our most important needs; and we have been greatly encouraged by Jerry I. Speyer, President, Tishman Speyer Properties, Development Manager of Equitable Center. We are grateful to Edward Larrabee Barnes, whose firm designed the Equitable headquarters building, for his earnest assistance, and to his associate, Benjamin Kracauer, for his meticulous attention to detail. Charles Froom has worked with our staff to design the interior gallery spaces with refinement and elegance.

The Whitney Museum at Equitable Center represents an optimal example of cooperation between business and the arts for the benefit of the public. We are gratified to have such a fine partner in our efforts on behalf of the public.

Tom Armstrong, *Director*
Whitney Museum of American Art

Twentieth-Century American Art: Highlights of the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art

Hammerstein's Roof Garden, 1903

After William Glackens moved from Philadelphia to New York in 1896, he continued to support himself as a newspaper and magazine illustrator. As with other members of The Eight, Glackens' considerable descriptive skills found their way into his painting. In *Hammerstein's Roof Garden* he used bravado brushstrokes to conjure one of the most fashionable nightspots of the day. This bustling club was located at the then unfrequented corner of Forty-second Street and Seventh Avenue. Its program varied from performances by the Spanish dancer Carmelita and bicycling jugglers to the celebrated tightrope act of Bird Millman that captures attention here.

In January 1930, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, a philanthropic fifty-five-year-old art collector, sculptor, and writer, announced her intention to open a "museum devoted exclusively to American art." Since 1907 she had been collecting work by contemporary American artists. Starting in 1914, regular one-artist and group exhibitions of American artists were held at Mrs. Whitney's studio on MacDougal Alley in Greenwich Village under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Young Artists (1915–28), the Whitney Studio Club (1918–28), and the Whitney Studio Galleries (1928–30). These organizations became active social centers and their frequent, lively exhibitions led to the purchase of many works from the artist-members. By the late 1920s, having gathered five hundred paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints by living American artists, Mrs. Whitney decided to invert standard museum practice. As she explained: "Ever since museums were invented, contemporary liberal artists have had difficulty in 'crashing the gate.' Museums have had the habit of waiting until a painter or sculptor had acquired a certain official recognition before they would accept his work within their sacred portals. Exactly the contrary practice will be carried out by the Whitney."

The distinctive realization of Mrs. Whitney's goal is apparent in the Permanent Collection works assembled here. These artists have passed from the state of being unrecognized and unwanted to that of becoming acclaimed masters of American art. The rich interplay of the paintings and

sculptures offers an overview of the seminal personalities and movements of twentieth-century American art.

The often gritty urban realism of The Eight begins any survey of innovative American art of this century. The self-assembled group (Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Robert Henri, Ernest Lawson, George B. Luks, Maurice Prendergast, Everett Shinn, and John Sloan) officially showed together only once, at the Macbeth Gallery in New York City in 1908, at which time Mrs. Whitney purchased four of the seven works that sold. Mostly trained as pictorial reporters, several of The Eight were employed as illustrators for the newspapers of the day. Their observant Impressionist art was based on New York City and its colorful residents and signaled a new honesty and straightforwardness in the selection of pictorial themes. These painters established a canon of representation that has continually resurfaced in this century of abstraction.

Abstraction itself began to take hold in Europe and America around 1910. During the period when the constitution of matter was unlocked by Albert Einstein, human consciousness was probed by Sigmund Freud, and the structure of narrative redefined by Gertrude Stein and James Joyce, painters developed innovative modes of depiction and, eventually, non-objectivity. The Cubist faceting of Picasso and Braque captured their subjects from numerous angles, introducing volumetric apprehension in place of conventional perspective. In Germany an intentionally primitive and riotous barrage of color and form expressed emotional equivalents of the artists' experiences and feelings. A fascination with movement and speed animated vanguard Italian painters and sculptors of the teens. These different approaches synthesized as the modernist movement, an artistic event parallel, in a sense, to the reordering of politics and borders that followed World War I.

Abstraction assumed a height of influence in America with the artist-organized Armory Show, held in New York in 1913. This huge survey of European and American modern-

***Plant Forms*, 1915**

Arthur Dove's early abstractions of 1910–20, exemplified by *Plant Forms*, frequently employed pastel on canvas or wood. With pastel's immediacy, he created organic verdancy by building up and layering, while examining nature as if it were under a microscope. In this series, Dove's concentration on a sinuous, sensate experience of nature, as opposed to the intellectualized geometries of Cubism and Futurism, established the terms of his vanguard and distinctly American non-objectivity.

Industry, before 1924

Preston Dickinson was among the earliest of the Precisionists, artists who applied the lessons of Cubism to vernacular American agrarian and industrial structures. Dickinson's clustered factories are bathed in unnaturally decorative pastel hues. With the expected distance between them collapsed and shadows painted without buildings to cast them, the factories suggest an imagined composition rather than an accurate view of America's industrial power.

ism caused an uproar in the press and was visited by over 85,000 people in its month-long run. The exhibition traveled to Boston and Chicago and was welcomed with less popular success but an equal level of outrage. Many major American artists participated alongside invited Europeans. Among the artists whose works are shown here, Oscar Bluemner, Stuart Davis, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper, George Bellows, William Glackens, Gaston Lachaise, Elie Nadelman, Maurice Prendergast, and John Sloan had works on display in the exhibition.

In the aftermath of the Armory Show many American painters adopted modernism, but their versions were often superficial, producing only a veneer of novelty. A more native permutation of Cubism appeared in the work of Precisionist painters like Preston Dickinson and Charles Demuth and the sculptor John Storrs, who presented pristine visions of vernacular structures that spoke for America's industrial and agrarian might.

Yet a large segment of the American art community continued to resist modernism. After 1920, the political isolationism of America generated an aesthetic isolationism that rejected European-based, non-representational art. The documentary impulse and the attraction of rendering everyday appearance enjoyed a forceful return, spurred by New York City's Art Students League, which became the leading American art academy. Studying in Europe was no longer deemed essential to an artist's career. Thomas Hart Benton passed through a modernist phase, but by the late 1920s he joined many other Americans, "seeking . . . artistic salvation in home experience." Charles Burchfield, Reginald Marsh, and Edward Hopper all pursued, as Hopper was to write of Charles Burchfield, "honest delineations of the American scene." As Hopper also observed of Burchfield, "by sympathy with the particular," these painters "made it epic and universal."

Starting in the early 1930s, representational art prevailed, as seen in midwestern American regionalists like Benton,

John Steuart Curry, and Grant Wood, urban Social Realists like the Soyer brothers and Ben Shahn, and other realists such as Burchfield, Hopper, and Marsh. Their paintings proclaimed American workers and working environments as the fit subjects of art. The Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Association (WPA) was the chief instrument of support for these and most other American artists during much of the financially hard-pressed 1930s. A representational populist view of American mores and traditions was emphasized in many of the WPA Easel productions.

The Social Realists often used their art to agitate for social change. Even Stuart Davis, the period's greatest abstractionist, acknowledged in 1936 that "increasing expression of social problems of the day in the new American art makes it clear that in times such as we are living in, few artists can honestly remain aloof, wrapt up in studio problems." But just as Davis kept doing his own abstractions, his younger colleague Ad Reinhardt boldly rejected what he called the " 'I HEAR AMERICA SINGING' schools of art." Davis, Reinhardt, Alexander Calder, Arshile Gorky, Isamu Noguchi, and John Storrs—the last three buoyed by the experience of living abroad—felt no need to record appearances and rely upon art's capacity to tell tales or promote social change. Reinhardt carried painting to a purely geometric realm, while Davis' elaborate compositional puzzles such as *Owh! in San Paõ* connected artistic philosophy, place, and phrase. Calder, Gorky, and Noguchi, on the other hand, eschewed the geometric, turning to an imagery of organic orbs, faceless corporeal components, and nature-based interlocking fragments.

Of all these abstract artists only Reinhardt and Gorky were to be grouped with the artists of the New York School—the Abstract Expressionists—who emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War and helped shift the center of artistic innovation from Paris to New York. Willem de Kooning, Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, Franz Kline, Richard Pousette-Dart, and Mark Rothko were among this

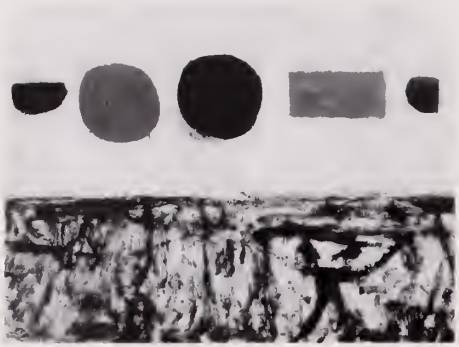
***Flower Abstraction*, 1924**

***Flower Abstraction* is among the earliest of Georgia O'Keeffe's well-known magnified renderings of floral blossoms. She pursued the theme most intensively in the decade after her marriage to the photographer Alfred Stieglitz in 1924. O'Keeffe's native American modernism, though akin to the Orphist and Synchromist art movements, is conceptually closest to Art Nouveau. *Flower Abstraction* is thus formulated from a vocabulary of curves and other undulating forms, suggestive of regeneration and growth. This simplified enlargement transforms the flower into the natural landscape itself.**

pivotal group. Their approaches ranged from action-based, built-up, thickly gestured paint surfaces to more thinly applied, flat, and meditative fields of color. The critics Harold Rosenberg and Meyer Schapiro captured the different aspects of this new sensibility:

> *At a certain moment the canvas began to appear to one American painter after another as an arena in which to act—rather than as a space in which to reproduce, redesign, analyze or "express" an object, actual or imagined. What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event.* (Harold Rosenberg)

> *We see excited movements, scattered spots and dashes, fervent streaking, an explosive release. The strokes of paint exist for themselves on the strongly marked plane of the canvas as tangible elements of decided texture and relief; sometimes they appear as distinct touches, sometimes they form dense complex crusts of interwoven, built-up layers, sometimes they are drawn out as filaments, entangled over the entire surface. . . . One can point also to an opposite approach of the painter Mark Rothko, who builds large canvases of a few big areas of colour in solemn contrast; his bands or rectangles are finely softened at the edges and have the air of filmy spectres, or after-effects of colour; generally three or four tones make up the scheme of the whole. . . .* (Meyer Schapiro)



***The Frozen Sounds, Number 1*, 1951**

Unlike many of the Abstract Expressionists, Adolph Gottlieb worked with a succession of pictorial formats throughout his forty-year career. *The Frozen Sounds, Number 1* was the inaugural painting in a series known as Imaginary Landscapes; the group follows his Pictographs of the 1940s and precedes his Bursts, which he began in 1957. *The Frozen Sounds, Number 1* asserts a landscape reference of clouds, planet, and moon shapes above a gesture-scarred earth. This binary compositional division was to be used by Gottlieb for the rest of his life.

Abstract Expressionism lent great coherence to American art. It mirrored the mood of confident but amorphous optimism of America in the 1950s and engendered some of the most transcendent, expressive, and original abstract art ever produced in this country. The different technical approaches taken by this group of painters (and by the sculptor David Smith) profoundly altered the direction of American art.

Even more indicative of the Abstract Expressionists' pervasive influence was the strong reaction to their emotive, personal gestures that occurred around 1960. The reaction had first appeared as stark geometric reductions in large-scale paintings by Al Held and Ellsworth Kelly, as well as in the Cubist-derived, monochromed constructions of Louise Nevelson. In an alternative development, Pop Art monumentalized the everyday and the banal. It assaulted the Abstract Expressionists' introversion and search for the sublime. Claes Oldenburg's *Dormeyer Mixer* inflates the appliance into an importance commensurate with its advertiser's and contented consumer's claims. Roy Lichtenstein, making a fetish of style, turned a simple still life into a glowing icon. Equally obsessed with perfecting a craft of representation, Richard Estes, painting from photographs, simulates a snack-laden window. His reportage of an ordinary shop window moves beyond Pop Art's irony to a realm of gross materialism.

In *Racing Thoughts*, Jasper Johns, the painter who had in the mid-1950s bridged Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art, uses still life to even more complex and byzantine ends. His bifurcated composition presents a very carefully painted yet essentially abstract panel at the left and a detailed depiction of his bathroom at the right. Together these panels essay issues of artistic derivation, friendship, and the self-revelatory possibilities of art. The most recent work in the exhibition, *Racing Thoughts* makes the brash revolutionary realism of The Eight appear strikingly simplistic, quaint, and distant. Since World War II American art has assumed a sophistication and international influence beyond anything that could have been foreseen eighty years ago.

Patterson Sims
Associate Curator, Permanent Collection

***Untitled*, 1953**

By 1949 Mark Rothko had arrived at the banded horizontal structure that prevailed during the final two decades of his painting. During the early to mid-1950s, his paintings also had the sunniest palette he was ever to use. The yellow, orange, and other muted tints of this work radiate affirmation and, notwithstanding the ragged brushed edges of his rectangles, a lush serenity. Charting the transit and glow of light, Rothko's stacked rectangles turn spectral and make emotion their content.

***Dolphin Fountain*, 1924**

In a series of sculptures in the 1920s, Gaston Lachaise concentrated on the representation of figures and animals vaulting in air. Sometimes graceful, sometimes whimsically comic, his leaping animal forms had their most accomplished expression in *Dolphin Fountain*. Since the dolphin can leap thirty feet in the air, this cluster of descending and soaring forms amid cresting waves mixes realism with rhythmic arabesques. Made in an edition of two and originally a functioning fountain, the sculpture represents Lachaise at his most convivial and technically complex.

Whitney Museum of American Art: A Brief History

1907
Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney organizes exhibition of work by contemporary artists at the Colony Club, New York, and opens her studio in Greenwich Village.

1908
Mrs. Whitney buys four of the seven paintings sold at The Eight's first exhibition, at the Macbeth Gallery.

1914
A house at 8 West Eighth Street is converted into the Whitney Studio, where regular exhibitions of work by young, progressive artists are held.

1915
Mrs. Whitney organizes the Society of Friends of Young Artists.

1918
Whitney Studio Club is launched by Mrs. Whitney at 147 West Fourth Street. Club serves as exhibition and social center. Early members include Stuart Davis, William J. Glackens, Edward Hopper, Maurice Prendergast, and John Sloan.

1928
Whitney Studio Club grows to 400 members plus a long waiting list; Club decides it has achieved its goal of breaking the academic monopoly of the arts and announces it will disband.

1928–30
Whitney Studio Galleries takes the place of Club and Studio.

1930
January 6, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney announces founding of the Whitney Museum of American Art, with exhibition program to focus on work of living American artists. Juliana Force named director. Subsequent directors are Hermon More (1948–58), Lloyd Goodrich (1958–68), John I. H. Baur (1968–74), Thomas N. Armstrong III (1974–present).

1931
November 18, Whitney Museum of American Art opens its doors to the public at 10 West Eighth Street. Mrs. Whitney's collection of approximately 600 works becomes nucleus of Permanent Collection; includes works by George Bellows, Thomas Hart Benton, Stuart Davis, Charles Demuth, Edward Hopper, Gaston Lachaise, Maurice Prendergast, and John Sloan.

1932
"First Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting" held. This series of invitational exhibitions of works by living American artists becomes a regular feature of the Museum's program.

1942
Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney dies; recognized as the greatest patron of American art of her time.

1948
Two important policy changes implemented: Museum begins to accept gifts for the first time, leading to considerable enlargement of the Permanent Collection; policy of not giving one-person shows to living artists is abandoned.

1949
Trustees of the Museum decide to concentrate on contemporary art; all works prior to 1900 are sold and proceeds go to a purchase fund for contemporary art. Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art donate part of their land on West Fifty-fourth Street to Whitney Museum for its new building.

1954
October 26, Whitney Museum of American Art opens at 22 West Fifty-fourth Street in new building.

1956
Friends of the Whitney established, composed of collectors and art patrons devoted to contemporary American art. It begins with 19 members; today it totals more than 1,000.

1961
Museum expands its Board of Trustees by appointing the first members outside Whitney family.

1963
Site at the corner of Seventy-fifth Street and Madison Avenue acquired for new Whitney Museum building necessitated by expanding programs.

1966
September 27, present Whitney Museum building opens at 945 Madison Avenue, designed by Marcel Breuer and Hamilton Smith, with Michael Irving as consulting architect.
Education Department established to explore new approaches to the concept of museum education and develop programs in studio art and art history.

1967
Independent Study Program begun, providing a unique opportunity for students to work with artists, critics, dealers, and Museum staff.

1970
New American Filmmakers Series launched as "showcase for films which would not otherwise be shown theatrically in New York City."
Museum receives the entire artistic estate of Edward Hopper, bequeathed by his widow.

1973
Museum opens its first branch at 55 Water Street in Lower Manhattan.
Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown Branch at Federal Reserve Plaza will open in its new location at 33 Maiden Lane in 1986 and will be funded by Park Tower Realty Corp.

1979
Reginald Marsh's widow bequeaths 850 works of art to the Museum.

1980
Museum celebrates its 50th Anniversary. Approximately 90 important works donated to commemorate occasion.

1981
Museum opens its first out-of-town branch in Stamford, Connecticut.
Whitney Museum of American Art, Fairfield County, is housed in and supported by Champion International Corporation.
Michael Graves selected to design expanded Museum on land owned by Museum on Madison Avenue south of existing building.
For first time in Museum's history a long-term exhibition of works from the Permanent Collection is installed.

1983
Museum opens its third branch in mid-Manhattan at Park Avenue and Forty-second Street. Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris is supported by Philip Morris Companies Inc.

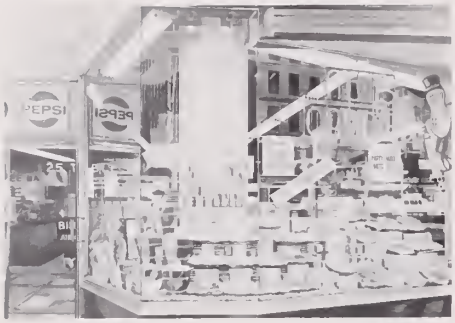
1985
Building plans for addition, designed by Michael Graves, announced.

1986
Museum opens its fourth branch.
Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center, on Seventh Avenue between Fifty-first and Fifty-second streets and supported by The Equitable, contains two galleries: one for long-term installations of works from the Permanent Collection and one for changing exhibitions.

Today
Museum attendance totals approximately 500,000 per year; branch audience accounts for one-third.
Exhibitions at Museum average 15 annually. Museum also presents about 10 film and video programs and circulates 10 exhibitions internationally each year.
Museum operates four branches which present 20 exhibitions free to the public each year.
Permanent Collection has increased more than tenfold: 600 works in 1931; 1,300 in 1954; 2,000 in 1966; 10,000 today.

***Railroad Sunset*, 1929**

Edward Hopper's *Railroad Sunset* was one of the undisputed masterpieces among the more than 2,500 works bequeathed to the Whitney Museum by Hopper's widow in 1968. As much as any other example from this vast holding, the painting exploits the spectacular possibilities of sunlight. An unoccupied lineman's tower is silhouetted above the silvery band of the tracks. Man-made structures are highlighted against a vista of light and an expanse of green hills. The scene is devoid of people, yet alive with their industry and mobility.



The Candy Store, 1969

While Richard Estes remains the quintessential Photo Realist, his employment of photography is far more improvisational than that of many of his hyper-realist colleagues. He uses several views of the same site, often imaginatively combining details of his favorite Manhattan locales. The aggressive visual complexity of *The Candy Store* energetically engages the eye. At the left center, Estes' signature and the work's date of completion are discreetly placarded. At the right, the famous anti-Nixon poster subverts the candidate's 1968 slogan from presidency to paternity.

Works in the Exhibition

Dimensions are in inches, height preceding width preceding depth. The accession number of a work refers to the year of acquisition and, after a decimal point, to the sequence of its addition to the Permanent Collection during that year. Promised gifts are noted with the letter P and the order of the two figures is reversed. For works accessioned in a group, the year is followed by the group accession number and the individual item within the group. During the course of the exhibition certain works included in the present checklist will be replaced by others from the Permanent Collection.

George Bellows (1882–1925)

Floating Ice, 1910
Oil on canvas, 45 × 63
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney
31.96

Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975)

The Lord Is My Shepherd, 1926
Tempera on canvas, 33¼ × 27¼
Purchase 31.100

Oscar Bluemner (1867–1938)

Old Canal Port, 1914
Oil on canvas, 30¼ × 40¼
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney
31.114

Charles Burchfield (1893–1967)

Old House by Creek, 1932–38
Oil on canvas, 34½ × 57
Purchase 39.14

Alexander Calder (1898–1976)

Hanging Spider, 1940
Painted sheet metal and wire, 49½ × 35½
Mrs. John B. Putnam Bequest 84.41

Pomegranate, 1949
Painted sheet aluminum, steel rods,
72 × 68
Purchase 50.6

Stuart Davis (1894–1964)

Egg Beater, Number 2, 1927
Oil on canvas, 29 × 36
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney
31.169

Owh! in San Paõ, 1951
Oil on canvas, 52¼ × 41¾
Purchase 52.2

Willem de Kooning (b. 1904)

Woman Acabonic, 1966
Oil on paper on canvas, 80½ × 36
Purchase, with funds from the artist and
Mrs. Bernard F. Gimbel 67.75

Charles Demuth (1883–1935)

Buildings, Lancaster, 1930
Oil on composition board, 24 × 20
Gift of an anonymous donor 58.63

Preston Dickinson (1891–1930)

Industry, before 1924
Oil on canvas, 30 × 24½
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney
31.173

Burgoyne Diller (1906–1965)

First Theme: Number 10, 1963
Oil on canvas, 72 × 72
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of
the Whitney Museum of American Art
64.26

Mark di Suvero (b. 1933)

New York Dawn (for Lorca), 1965
Wood, steel, and iron, 78 × 74 × 72
Purchase, with funds from the Howard
and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.
66.52

Arthur Dove (1880–1946)

Plant Forms, 1915
Pastel on canvas, 17¼ × 24
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs.
Roy R. Neuberger 51.20

Richard Estes (b. 1935)

The Candy Store, 1969
Oil and synthetic polymer on canvas, 47¼ × 68¼
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 69.21

William J. Glackens (1870–1938)

Hammerstein's Roof Garden, 1903
Oil on canvas, 30 × 25
Purchase 53.46

Arshile Gorky (1904–1948)

Painting, 1936–37
Oil on canvas, 38 × 48
Purchase 37.39

Adolph Gottlieb (1903–1974)

The Frozen Sounds, Number 1, 1951
Oil on canvas, 36 × 48
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel M. Kootz 37.3

Philip Guston (1913–1980)

Dial, 1956
Oil on canvas, 72 × 76
Purchase 56.44

Marsden Hartley (1877–1943)

Forms Abstracted, 1913
Oil on canvas, 39½ × 31¾
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson D. Walker, and purchase, by exchange 52.37

Al Held (b. 1928)

The Dowager Empress, 1965
Acrylic on canvas, 96 × 72
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 66.3

Edward Hopper (1882–1967)

Railroad Sunset, 1929
Oil on canvas, 28½ × 47¼
Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.1170

Second Story Sunlight, 1960
Oil on canvas, 40 × 50
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 60.54

Jasper Johns (b. 1930)

Racing Thoughts, 1983
Encaustic and collage on canvas, 48 × 75⅛
Purchase, with funds from the Burroughs Wellcome Purchase Fund; Leo Castelli; the Wilfred P. and Rose J. Cohen Purchase Fund; the Julia B. Engel Purchase Fund; the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States Purchase Fund; the Sondra and Charles Gilman, Jr. Foundation, Inc.; S. Sidney Kahn; The Lauder Foundation, Leonard and Evelyn Lauder Fund; the Sara Roby Foundation; and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 84.6

Franz Kline (1910–1962)

Dahlia, 1959
Oil on canvas, 82 × 67
Purchase, with funds from an anonymous group of friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 66.90

Gaston Lachaise (1882–1935)

Dolphin Fountain, 1924
Bronze, 17 × 39 × 25¼
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.41

Roy Lichtenstein (b. 1923)

Still Life with Crystal Bowl, 1973
Oil and magna on canvas, 52 × 42
Purchase, with funds from Frances and Sydney Lewis 77.64

Reginald Marsh (1898–1954)

Why Not Use the "L"?, 1930
Egg tempera, 36 × 48
Purchase 31.293

***Still Life with Crystal Bowl*, 1973**

In the early 1960s, at the onset of his mature work, Roy Lichtenstein essayed the still-life theme in isolated product advertisements and single, commonplace object presentations. These images were backdropped in Ben-Day dots and had none of the interplay of the series of object arrangements produced by Lichtenstein from 1972 to 1974. These were more traditional in their concern for complex arrangements of objects, iconographic innuendo, and presentation on a table or flat plane in an interior setting. Yet in the case of the 1973 *Still Life with Crystal Bowl*, some of the earlier approach was fused with a treatment patterned on the iconic plainness of American folk painting. Later Lichtenstein still lifes have been dressed in styles ranging from Cubism to Expressionism, but *Still Life with Crystal Bowl* remains one of the artist's most straightforward and least ironic statements.

***Dormeyer Mixer*, 1965**

Claes Oldenburg's assault on conventional artistic themes, modes of expression, and scale started in 1960 with subjects drawn from the corner store and moved on by mid-decade to the American office, garage, and home (with an emphasis on the kitchen and bathroom). His most ambitious conceptions were executed in cardboard, vinyl, and canvas. The limp sensuality and sexual innuendo of the last two materials were employed for Oldenburg's two Dormeyer Mixer sculptures. Floating above the viewer like a consumer's dream, the Museum's vinyl version evolved from a newspaper advertisement to a notebook page to a careful schematic drawing. The artist's contention that "gravity is my favorite form creator" is reinforced by the inscriptions on his notebook study, which indicate that the mixer's blades reminded him of rhinoceros earrings and pendulous breasts.

Elie Nadelman (1882–1946)

Sur la Plage, 1916
Marble and bronze, 23 × 26¼ × 7½
50th Anniversary Gift of the Sara Roby Foundation in honor of Lloyd Goodrich
80.56

Louise Nevelson (b. 1900)

Royal Tide II, 1961–63
Painted wood, 94½ × 126½ × 8
Gift of the artist 69.161

Isamu Noguchi (b. 1904)

The Gunas, 1948
Marble, 73¼ × 26½ × 25½
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.
75.18

Georgia O'Keeffe (b. 1887)

Flower Abstraction, 1924
Oil on canvas, 48 × 30
50th Anniversary Gift of Sandra Payson
85.47

Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929)

Dormeyer Mixer, 1965
Kapok, vinyl, and wood, 32 × 20
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.
66.55

Richard Pousette-Dart (b. 1916)

Within the Room, 1942
Oil on canvas, 36 × 60
Promised 50th Anniversary Gift of the artist P. 4.79

Maurice Prendergast (1859–1924)

The Cove, 1916
Oil on canvas, 28 × 39¾
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney
31.322

Ad Reinhardt (1913–1967)

Number 30, 1938
Oil on canvas, 40½ × 42½
Promised gift of Mrs. Ad Reinhardt
P. 31.77

Mark Rothko (1903–1970)

Untitled, 1953
Mixed media on canvas, 105¼ × 50 5/16
Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc. 85.43.2

Ed Ruscha (b. 1937)

Large Trademark with Eight Spotlights, 1962
Oil on canvas, 67 × 132
Purchase 85.41

John Sloan (1871–1951)

The Picnic Grounds, 1906–7
Oil on canvas, 24 × 36
Purchase 41.34

John Storrs (1885–1956)

Forms in Space, c. 1924
Aluminum, brass, copper, and wood on black marble base, 28½ × 5½ × 5¼
Gift of Charles Simon 77.58

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Whitney Museum of American Art
at Equitable Center

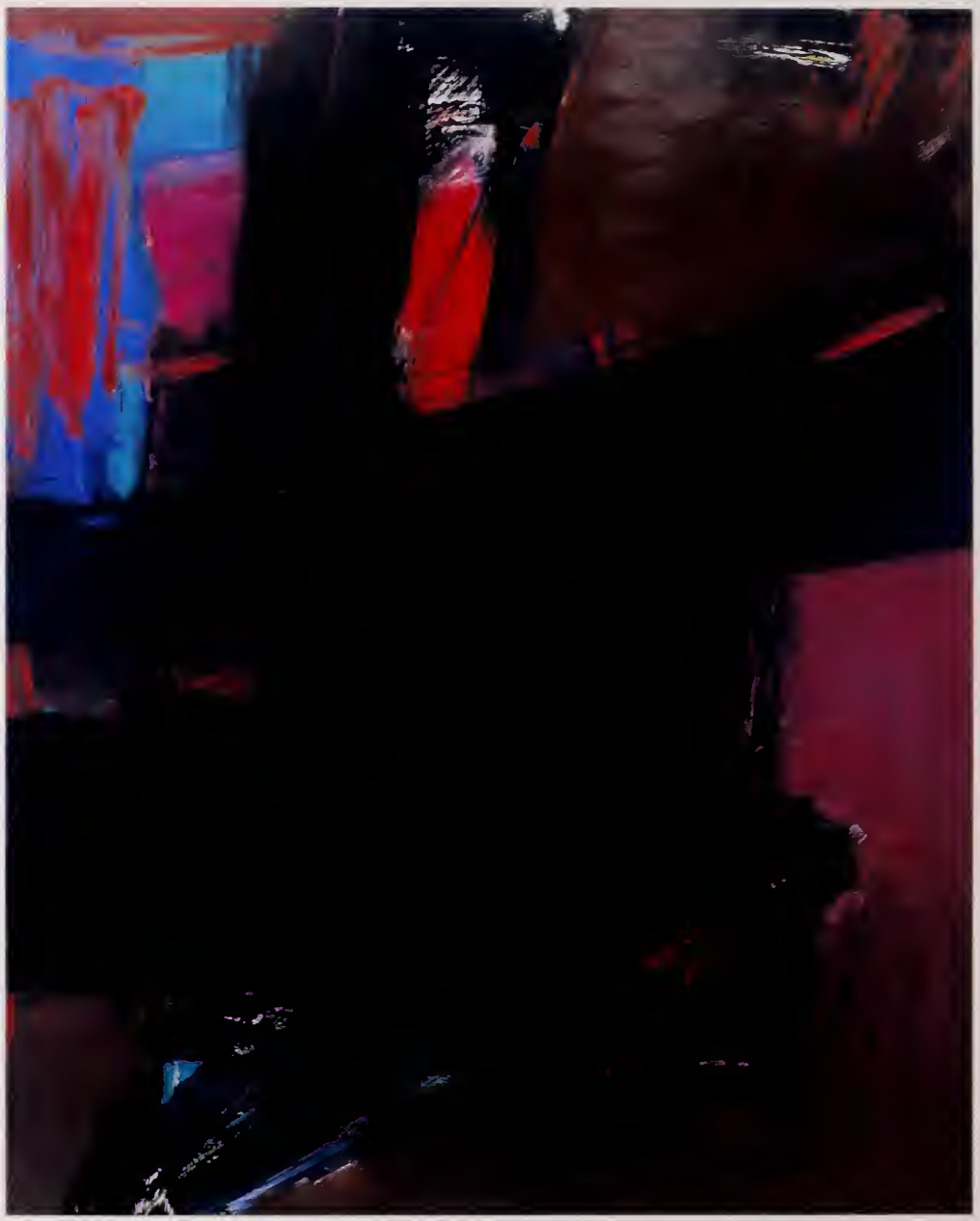
787 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10019
(212) 554-1113

Hours
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 11:00–6:00
Thursday 11:00–7:30
Saturday 12:00–4:00
Free admission

Gallery Talks
12:30 Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Tours by appointment

The Museum and its programs are supported by The Equitable.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center



February 13, 1986–April 15, 1987